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# LEADERS & LEARNERS

THE VOICE OF THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF  
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS / L'ASSOCIATION  
CANADIENNE DES ADMINISTRATEURS ET DES  
ADMINISTRATRICES SCOLAIRES

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## The 2007 CASA Annual Conference: Memories Of Whitehorse And Beyond

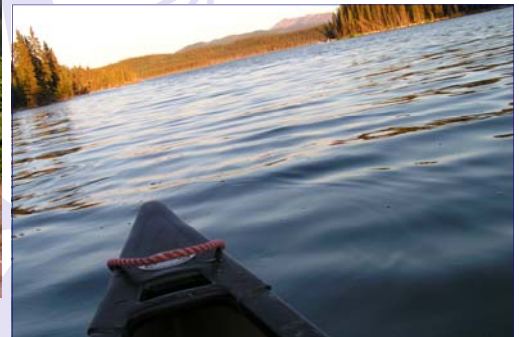


**A**dventure. Wilderness. Tradition. A visit to the Yukon should include each of these to be considered a truly engaging experience. Fortunately, that's just the kind of visit the organizers of the 2007 CASA Annual Summer Conference planned. Delegates and their families enjoyed the best of Whitehorse and beyond this July. Whether tasting northern foods, hearing northern songs or meeting northern people, we won't soon forget our trip to the land of the midnight sun.



The natural beauty of the Yukon was a wonder to experience.

*Photos by Tara Lee Wittchen*



## Pre-conference Activities: Sightseeing Adventures In The Yukon, BC And Alaska



Above: **Kath Rhyason** admires the spectacular view before snapping a photo.

Right: **Noreen** and **Lee Lucente** prepare to cross the border into Alaska.



Left: Here the group is afforded another amazing photo opportunity along the way to Alaska.

Right: **Jon Hutt** (left) and **Steve Messner** discuss photography techniques: film versus digital.



Left: One of the single-engine planes used to take folks flightseeing near Haines, Alaska.

Below: A great view of the glaciers and mountains.

*Photos by Tara Lee Wittchen*



Travel and change of  
place impart new  
vigor to the mind.  
—Seneca

## Pre-conference Activities, continued: Sightseeing Adventures In The Yukon, BC And Alaska



Left: It's the three Marilyns! Left to right, Marilyn Nippard, Marilyn Ewen and Marilyn Miller pose in the rain with the all-terrain "mules" at Takshanuk Mountain Trail near Haines.

Right, above: A reflection of the summit on the White Pass and Yukon Railroad. Folks took this popular train ride before and during the conference.

Right, below: The wheels on the bus go round and round...



Left: There's nothing quite like a batch of freshly baked cookies served up by a handsome cowboy guide. The superb hospitality of the hosts at the Takshanuk Mountain Trail was surpassed only by the wonderful views along the trail.

Below, left: Ed Wittchen stops the van to take a photograph of a young grizzly bear.



Below, right: Lovely northern "sunset."

*Photos by Tara Lee Wittchen*



The whole object of travel is not to set foot on foreign land; it is at last to set foot on one's own country as a foreign land.

—GK Chesterton

## Frank Turner's Muktuk Kennels



Above: Frank Turner (far left) welcomes another tour group to his home and kennels.

Left: Look at those beautiful puppy dog eyes!

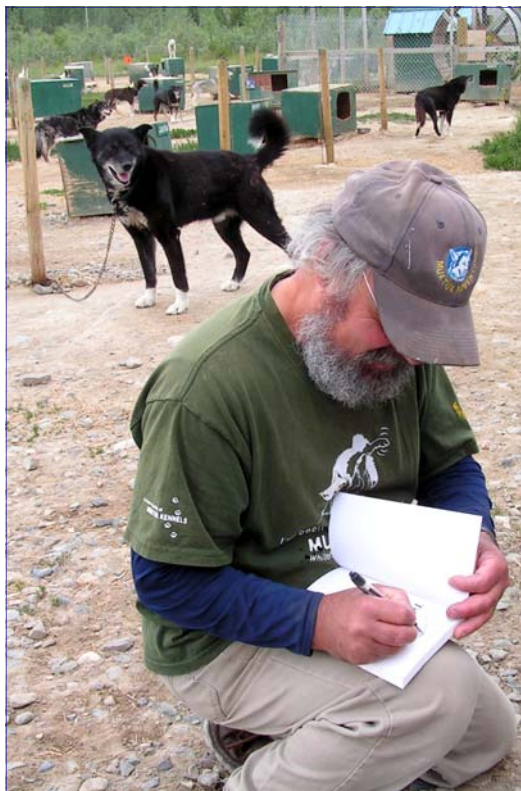


Left, top: Frank's dogs are extremely friendly and affectionate. Here Heather Cullen gets a kiss from a new friend.

Left, middle: Three sled dogs watching the visitors watching them.


*Photo by Jon Hutt*

Left, bottom: Frank demonstrates his technique for staying warm during his rest periods on the Yukon Quest. Brrrr! Imagine having to get up to go to the bathroom in minus 60 degree weather.



Left: Frank signs a copy of his book while his sled dogs look on.

*Photos by Tara Lee Wittchen  
except where indicated*



The world is a book,  
and those who do  
not travel read only  
a page.  
—St. Augustine

## The Opening Of The 2007 CASA Annual Conference

**C**ASA's Alberta/Yukon/Northwest Territories director **Chris Gonnet** hosted the opening ceremonies for the 2007 Annual Conference on Thursday, July 12. Chris is a former director of learning (Secondary Programs) for the Yukon Department of Education and is the current superintendent for the Grand Prairie Public School District in Alberta.

Chris introduced a number of special guests to the conference, each of whom brought their own welcoming message.

Elder **Emma Sam** offered the welcoming prayer. A fluent speaker of Tlingit, Emma is from the Ishkitàn clan. She is employed by the Government of Yukon as a Tlingit language specialist with Aboriginal Language Services.

**Gail Anderson**, deputy chief of the Ta'an Kwach'an Council, offered a welcome to the traditional First Nation lands. She noted that she is working hard to learn her community's traditional language so she can pass it on. Her grandparents and her mother had difficulties in school, she said, but they always stressed the importance of education and of being educated in the two cultures.

"I'm glad to see this conference; it's a good step," she added.

Additional welcoming messages were presented by the grand chief of the Council of Yukon First Nations **Andy Carvill**, deputy mayor of Whitehorse **Doug Graham** and Yukon's minister of education **Patrick Rouble**.

"This is an important event for Canadian educators," he said, "a continuation of the dialogue to improve education across Canada. We have recognized that different students have different learning styles and needs."

*Right:* The 40-foot wooden Mountie. He stands at attention at the entrance to the High Country Inn.



Next, **Nicole Kuster** shared her song "Grandfather," a tune she wrote about her grandfather **Elijah Smith**.


Recent Order of Canada recipient **Piers MacDonald** concluded the opening events with his overview of education in the Yukon. His talk was a natural segue into the rest of the day's theme on experiential education in the Yukon.



*Above:* **Bob Sharp** and **Chris Gonnet**, former Yukon Department of Education colleagues, share a laugh following Bob's talk on his experiences introducing the Experiential Science 11 program to Yukon schools.

*Below:* **Nicole Kuster** of the Ta'an Kwach'an Council sings her song "Grandfather" during the conference's opening proceedings.

*Photos by Tara Lee Wittchen*

Wandering re-establishes the original harmony which once existed between man and the universe.  
—Anatole France

## Experiential And Aboriginal Education In The Yukon



Above, left: Riding the waves on the Tatshenshini on Friday, July 13. Who's superstitious? Certainly not these rafters.

*Photo courtesy of Tatshenshini Expediting*

Above, right: Adjusting helmets and wetsuits before the rafting.

Right: **Lee Kubica** talks about wild mushrooms and other plants found in the Yukon during a nature walk on Thursday, July 12.




Left: Learning how to bead.

Below, left: APTN films the Saturday workshops with Kwanlin Dun First Nation.

Below, right: An Elder shares information about traditional plants and medicine with visitors at the Lake Laberge Fish Camp.

*Photos by Tara Lee Wittchen except where indicated*



Like all great  
travellers, I have  
seen more than I  
remember, and  
remember more  
than I have seen.  
—Benjamin Disraeli

## First Nations Education: An Address By His Honour James Bartleman

His Honour **James Bartleman** is a member of the Mnjikaning First Nation. He was born in Orillia, Ontario, and grew up in Port Carling. He earned a Bachelor of Arts (honours) in History from the University of Western Ontario in 1963. On March 7, 2002, he was sworn in as the 27th Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. He is the province's 41st vice regal representative since **John Graves Simcoe** arrived in Upper Canada in 1792. He is also the first person from a First Nation to hold a vice regal office in the province.

His Honour has identified three key priorities for his mandate: to eliminate the stigma of mental illness, to fight racism and discrimination, and to encourage Aboriginal young people.

In 2004, he launched the first Lieutenant Governor's Book Drive, which collected 1.2 million good used books for First Nations schools and Native Friendship Centres throughout Ontario. To further encourage literacy and bridge building, His Honour launched a Twinning Program for Native and non-Native schools in Ontario and Nunavut, and established literacy summer camps in five northern First Nations communities as a pilot project. In 2006 he extended his summer literacy camps program to 28 fly-in communities and secured funding for five years. He also launched Club Amick, a reading club for Native children in Ontario's north. In the winter of 2007, he completed a second Book Drive, collecting 900,000 books for Aboriginal children in Ontario, northern Quebec and Nunavut.

**T**he best, most advanced, culturally sensitive pedagogical practices will mean little if children come to school hungry, declared Ontario Lieutenant Governor **James Bartleman**. "If the kids are living in Third World conditions, then you're just stirring the top of the water with your paddle."

And so opened His Honour's hour-long address to CASA conference delegates on Saturday, July 14, at the High Country Inn. His talk was a mix of poignant personal tales, heartbreaking statistics and his unique sense of humour.

Mr. Bartleman stated he felt he was among kindred spirits in the conference room, as he too was once a teacher. He then shared details of his childhood. His mother is from the Mnjikaning First Nation (formerly Rama) and his father is Caucasian. In those days, he explained, First Nations women who married non-Native men were effectively banned from the community.

His parents were teenagers when they married, and only had grade 4 educations. "But Dad always managed to find work," he added.

Mr. Bartleman described his childhood as a "Rousseauian type of existence, as we lived close to the village dump where me and my brother had first pick of the dump: comic books, toys, all sorts of great stuff from tourists."

The brothers even had their own private zoo, he said, what with all the raccoons, mice and rats scurrying about. They also had their own bonfire, as there was usually something

burning at the dump.

"It always brings a tear to my eye whenever I smell burning cardboard or orange crates," His Honour recalled with a grin. Despite the grim reality of those surroundings, Mr. Bartleman managed to tell these tales in such a way as to make them sound like hilarious boyhood adventures.

"As I got older, I began to realize it wasn't socially acceptable to live near the dump or to revel in that fact," he said as the room erupted in laughter. The family moved from their shabby tent to a cottage.

"In winter," he added, again to much laughter. He recalled mornings when all six family members were huddled together in bed, a layer of frost covering the blanket.

"This wasn't really tough, though," he said. There was always food because his dad was a hard worker. "What was tough was the racism—this was old Ontario—against Natives, blacks, Chinese and others."

Kids called them dirty half breeds and his mother was told to go back to the reserve. That was when his mother explained to these children that her people had been there for thousands of years and they had the  
(Continued on page 8)



**The most important  
trip you may take in  
life is meeting  
people halfway.**

**—Henry Boye**

## First Nations Education: An Address By His Honour James Bartleman, continued

*(Continued from page 7)*

right to be there. Eventually, Mr. Bartleman said, people got to know them and became their friends. In fact, he reported, local residents now want to name a road in the community after him. When he was asked what road they should choose, he suggested the James Bartleman Dump Road. Again, the room erupted in laughter.

While a number of his childhood anecdotes elicited laughs, just as many tugged at the heartstrings. Mr. Bartleman's mother suffered from depression, and that left a lasting impression on him.

"I never forgot the disastrous effect of mental illness on families," he said. He suffered from depression himself, he said, and still takes medication for it to this day. This is part of the inspiration behind his mandate to eliminate the stigma of mental illness, he explained.

Another of his three mandates is to encourage Aboriginal youth. He spoke of how quickly that segment of the population is growing.

"The good news," he said, "is that a small but vibrant middle class has emerged."

There are tens of thousands of university graduates, for example. There is also a pride in Native roots today that didn't exist before, and a cultural renaissance.

"In my view, however, the bad news outweighs the good," he stated before sharing a number of tragic statistics.

For example, in the early 1990s, Aboriginal adults made up two per cent of the Canadian population but 11 per cent of admissions to federal prisons. That last percentage has since gone up, he said. Overall, the Aboriginal population is young and growing. Thirty-five per cent of them are less than 15 years old. If left unchecked, the Aboriginal prison population could reach 25 per cent in less than 10 years.

Life expectancy for Aboriginal people in Canada is lower than average, His Honour said. Infant mortality is higher. There are a huge number of violent deaths. Tuberculosis rates are six times higher than in the rest of Canadians, and there are higher rates for diabetes, major depression and obesity.

"They are the poorest of all minority groups in Canada," he said. Education levels are lower than in the rest of Canadians. First Nations people are more likely to be in single-parent families. There is a shortage of health care workers in First Nations communities, particularly nurses who are their primary source of care. Overall mental health continues to be at the lowest end of the continuum, he added.

These problems are all lingering effects of the residential schools, Mr. Bartleman said, when a whole generation of people were effectively orphaned. These children grew up and did not have models for parenting skills. Aboriginal families experience eight times the rate of family violence as the rest of Canadian families. Abused women often turn to drugs or alcohol or suicide. The general suicide rate in the Aboriginal population is two to three times higher than

that in the rest of Canada, and seven to eight times higher in young Aboriginal people.

"Canada's Native people by and large live in Third World

conditions," His Honour said. "Canadian Native people do not have equal opportunities." He drew comparisons to the "separate but equal" status of African Americans in the American south from half a century ago.

On the subject of education, the statistics are just as disheartening. Government funding for First Nations education is lower than in non-reserve schools but the costs are higher due to factors such as building rot or a lack of books and supplies.

"We have ended up in Canada with a system of band-run reserve schools that are 'separate but equal.' Canadians know about it but it doesn't penetrate their minds," he said.

Housing conditions, as many Canadians now know, are frequently appalling. Homes are heavily overcrowded. Older people are living in packing crates with roofs made out of tarpaulins, even during the winter. There

*(Continued on page 9)*

**"We have ended up in Canada with a system of band-run reserve schools that are 'separate but equal.' Canadians know about it but it doesn't penetrate their minds."**



**I soon realized that no journey carries one far unless, as it extends into the world around us, it goes an equal distance into the world within.**

**—Lillian Smith**



## First Nations Education: An Address By His Honour James Bartleman, continued

*(Continued from page 8)*

are boil-water advisories that have been in effect for decades.

“This is the country the UN development index rated number five, the same as Sweden,” said Mr. Bartleman. “The greatest irony of all is we are preaching abroad but not contributing at home. We will not be able to resolve the educational challenges until equal rights and opportunities exist for Native peoples.”

All three levels of government—federal, provincial and on reserve—are duplicating services yet the needs are still not met.

“It’s the kids who continue to suffer,” said His Honour.

“Governments are ultimately responsible. They have the funding and they are responsible to the population. The focus should be to include all marginalized people in society. However, it is obvious we can’t leave everything to the government.”

In the past 25 years, he said, we have seen the rise of civil society: People in developing countries have organized and have taken their struggles to the streets if necessary. NGOs move in and replace aid agencies. Mr. Bartleman stated that approach needs to be taken in Canada, along with some of the ideas that were being discussed at the conference.

“My first job was in teaching, and one of the things that had the greatest impact on me was discovering the transformative power of books,” he said. At this point in his presentation, His Honour focused on what is happening in Ontario First Nations and the development of his summer literacy and mental wellness camps.

“Ontario is different in terms of First Nations populations,” he explained. There are more people, more diverse groups and a bigger land mass than in other regions. There is also a strong middle class in Toronto. The First Nations populations are younger.

“As you move to the north, conditions change drastically. Southern reserves do not differ from neighbouring non-Native communities. In the north, it is like Third World conditions.”

These conditions are undergoing huge shocks of transition:

cultural shock, destruction of culture and self esteem, appalling poverty and huge numbers of suicides. In the past decade, he said, there were over 2,500 suicide attempts in the fly-in communities. After citing a number of suicide statistics, His Honour shared a number of horrific details including the story of a young girl who hung herself from a tree in front of the community’s school. “These children have no hope,” he said.

That’s where Camp Plant-A-Seed comes in. The Lieutenant Governor shared with conference delegates an eight-minute DVD highlighting the activities and opportunities at the summer literacy and mental wellness camps he has

founded. The DVD featured photos of children and counsellors at the camps taken by members of PhotoSensitive, a

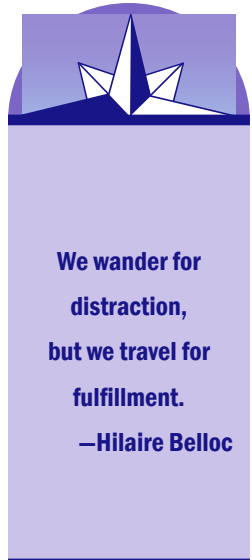
non-profit collective of photographers determined to explore how photography can contribute to social justice. These photographers, he explained, donated their time to document the children’s experiences at camp.

“Act in areas which are self evident,” he said. His Honour came up with his scenarios and budgets for the camp, and developed strong partnerships with the communities. Each community had to provide five of their own counsellors as well as Elders. Staff at the camps include non-Aboriginal counsellors from the south, he said, to show that the non-Aboriginal south cares about First Nations children in the north.

His Honour indicated that there were no adolescent suicides in the communities where the camps have been set up, but there were in the surrounding communities.

It costs \$1,200 for each child to attend a week-long session at camp. His Honour went fundraising first to the universities. He told the presidents of each of the institutions that they all “want the numbers [of Aboriginal students] but they were all going after the same small group of graduates in southern non-band

*(Continued on page 11)*



## An Interview With His Honour James Bartleman, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

Following His Honour's address to the conference delegates, he graciously gave a few minutes of his time to allow *Leaders & Learners* editor **Tara Lee Wittchen** to interview him for the newsletter. Here is their conversation.

***What is your best advice for senior administrators who have access to budgets and policy? What can they take back with them from this type of conference that you believe will lead to real change?***

I think that the whole issue of the role of Aboriginal people in Canadian society will become more and more critical as the years go by.

Canada as a society has to bear in mind that we are at a critical point. We have the Aboriginal community, especially the huge flow of young people coming of age, they have a potential to be of tremendous benefit to Canadian society. They can provide the skilled workers, educated people of the future.

Or, if educators do not do their job, if society does not recognize the importance of making a special effort to ensure that they are properly educated, then they will be a huge liability as well for society. It's either/or.

This is why this conference focusing on education among Aboriginal people is so critical. I would hope that by having the perspective on the benefits and possible liabilities on those issues, it will inspire them to pay more attention to Aboriginal issues in the future.

***What about our younger educators? We also have some teachers here who are in a mentorship role, following their administrators, and they're going to be moving up in the system. Is there something you could say specifically to them about the best thing they could do?***

What I would recommend to them is they should plan at some stage in their career to teach in a First Nations community or in a government-run school or provincial school where there is a large First Nations component.

This would be wonderful for cross-cultural purposes and will equip them to be better prepared to deal with the com-

ing challenge of Aboriginal young people as that cohort moves through the Canadian demographic ocean.

***How can CASA members learn more about the projects you've discussed here today?***

They can go to the Ontario Lieutenant Governor's website ([www.lt.gov.on.ca](http://www.lt.gov.on.ca)). It's all there. We've got lots of information on all the programs in detail.

Or they can approach Frontier College for information on the summer camp.

They can approach the Southern Ontario Library Service for my Young Readers Program.

They can approach the Toronto District School Board for everything that's going on with what I'm doing with Nunavut. They can also approach the Ontario Principals' Council, which represents 5,000 principals and vice principals in Ontario, for the twinning initiative.

***A number of people here said they were moved by your presentation. I'm wondering if you might share with readers the most inspirational experi-***

***ence you've had in your role as lieutenant governor and working with these initiatives. What positive thing can you share that may inspire them as you did with us today?***

I think the most touching and inspirational thing for me was arriving with a Canadian military convoy of books in King Fisher Lake.

It's a remote community in northern Ontario. It was at about 7:30 or so in the morning in the winter in the dark, and almost the whole community was out there, waiting for the books. They had never had books in the

*(Continued on page 11)*



Ontario Lt. Gov. James Bartleman



**A window of  
opportunity won't  
open itself.  
—Dave Weinbaum**

## An Interview With His Honour, continued

*(Continued from page 10)*

school before. And they were grabbing the boxes of books to go put them into empty shelves and then grabbing books off them and going with their children. Often the children would be helping the parents read. Nobody can tell me that Native kids are not interested in reading.

Another thing would be to be in Fort Severn watching huge cases of books donated by ordinary Ontarians come floating down in parachutes onto the Severn River and the community being there to receive them.

I don't think people realize how unequally these communities are treated, and they don't realize also how much generosity is out there among ordinary people who meet that need by giving books and assisting and forming partnerships. That was wonderful to see those huge parachutes and books coming down.



Left to right: Jim Gibbons, Chris Gonnet and His Honour James Bartleman listen to a panel discussion on Saturday.

## First Nations Education: An Address By His Honour James Bartleman, continued

*(Continued from page 9)*

schools who already had equal opportunities." Nine university presidents came forward with money. His Honour added that he has encouraged the universities to develop direct relationships with these communities for the long term if they want to continue to make a positive difference.

He then went to the teachers' federations, various unions and corporations, and received a lot of financial support. Enough, in fact, to fund 36 camps over five years. Canadian Tire donated sports equipment, the NHL Players' Association donated hockey equipment and a company from Montreal donated guitars.

This past summer, there were between 2,500 and 3,000 children attending his camps.

Although His Honour's term is coming to an end this fall, the new Lieutenant Governor, David Onley, has promised to continue Mr. Bartleman's book drives.

"People want to help. When you talk about learning and books, everybody gets onside. They are seeing kids with books in their hands instead of not ever reading. It's through the generosity of civil society and ordinary Canadians."

His Honour's young readers' program is funded entirely by

the public; he raised \$1 million for it. Every \$50 gets four books and a children's magazine subscription for a child, he said.

"If there's anything I can do to take this model across the country, I think we could really make a difference," he said to the delegates. "My message to you is unless we start to address some of the social indication problems, everything else is just going to be froth at the top of the water."

Following his talk, former CASA president **Bob Mills** took to the podium for a few moments.

"Your talk was full of passion; your passion is fantastic," he said.

CASA has taken several related issues under its obligation, he added: literacy, hungry children and the well being of all children, and the needs of Aboriginal children. The organization is trying to put together a pan-Canadian forum to address these issues.

He then thanked the Lieutenant Governor in both English and French.

**The probability that we may fail in the struggle ought not to deter us from the support of a cause we believe to be just.**  
—Abraham Lincoln

## Aboriginal Education Successes And Challenges: A National Panel Discussion

On Saturday, July 14, following His Honour **James Bartleman's** address, CASA's executive director **Frank Kelly** moderated a panel discussion about Aboriginal education successes. His Honour stayed on to share his remarks at the conclusion of this important session.

Panelists included **John Wright** and **Jan Wallace**, principal and vice principal of Elijah Smith Elementary School in Whitehorse; **Allan Craig**, director of education with the Kenora Catholic District School Board; **LaVina Gillespie**, assistant superintendent for Northlands School Division in Peace River, Alberta; **Evelyn Good Striker**, director of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Services for Alberta Education; **Jane Martin**, director of Aboriginal Policy with the Information and Strategic Services Division for Alberta Education; and James Bartleman, Ontario's Lieutenant Governor.

John Wright and Jan Wallace spoke about their school first. The pride they have in Elijah Smith Elementary School was abundantly clear. It is a public school for grades K to 7, with a population of about 50 per cent First Nations and 50 per cent non-First Nations. Some of the programs in place to help meet the needs of its students include full day kindergarten every day, the Second Step Conflict Resolution program, Southern Tutchone language classes, the Reading Recovery program, the Home Reading program, the Reading Rocks program, the Breakfast program and the Quality Daily Physical Education program.

John cited a number of elements his staff consider crucial for Aboriginal students to achieve success in their school, such as using diverse measurement tools to monitor students' progress, establishing high expectations for Aboriginal students, working to establish culturally friendly learning climates, encouraging open door policies so that families of students feel welcome at the school and fostering strong community ownership of school programs.

Jan, who started her teaching career in northern Ontario, began by listing factors that make Elijah Smith "a place where kids want to come and want to learn."

The school is open at 7am, she explained. Children who need a place to eat breakfast are welcomed to share food and time with friends and teachers. There is art on the walls; just walking into the school is physically welcoming.

Feasts are held at the beginning and end of each school



Left to right: **Jane Martin**, **Allan Craig**, **Frank Kelly**, **LaVina Gillespie** and **John Wright** listen as **Evelyn Good Striker** shares her thoughts and experiences with successes and challenges in Aboriginal education in Alberta.

year, she said, to welcome parents into the school community. Even when the school year is officially out, there are cultural camps held in summer.

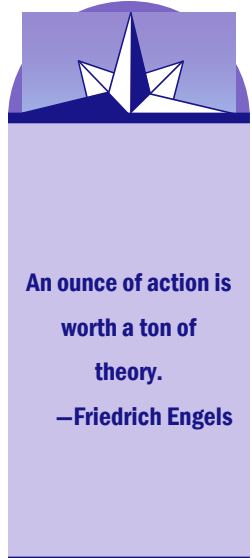
Jan presented information on the school's efforts to improve student literacy skills, such as Reading Rocks and Reading Recovery. As well, the full-day kindergarten concept was piloted at Elijah Smith; it is now Yukon-wide.

There is a Kwanlin Dun tutor program in place, and tutors from that community are in the school every day. More than half the staff at Elijah Smith are First Nations, and administrators work to encourage more First Nations teachers to become part of the school. Elders are brought in to the school simply to be present, she added, to be available to talk.

"It is important for students to see First Nations people as role models," she said.

Allan Craig of the Kenora Catholic District School Board began his presentation by noting how the Lieutenant Governor's address moved him earlier that morning.

"Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the mo-  
(Continued on page 13)



An ounce of action is  
worth a ton of  
theory.  
—Friedrich Engels

## Aboriginal Education Successes And Challenges: A National Panel Discussion, continued

(Continued from page 12)

ments that take our breath away,” he said.

Allan’s presentation, focusing on the Aboriginal education success initiatives at each level of administration, will soon be available on the CASA website.

In her opening remarks, LaVina Gillespie quoted Chief **Dan George**: “It’s only dead salmon that flow with the stream.” She then used the model of the tipi to describe the various states of Aboriginal education. The poles or ribs, for example, represent the most fragile state of Aboriginal education: the creation of the reserves, the *Indian Act*, residential schools.

“As we struggle, we sometimes forget to take note of successes,” she said. So even that tiny opening at the top of the tipi where the ribs intersect can represent hope. “Even though it is the smallest part you know there is light when you look up.”

She reported watching the APTN national news every night and watching with great pride leaders such as **Ovide Mercredi**, **Phil Fontaine** and **Matthew Cooncome**, products of education.

“We have gained much. People have succeeded in our system. It is important to take stock of our achievements,” she said.

In closing, she referred to a poster she has hanging in her office, an image of **Elijah Harper** with the words “A single



**John Orr** (foreground) helps **Allan Craig** (at podium) with his PowerPoint presentation as panelists **Jane Martin** (centre left) and **Evelyn Good Striker** (centre right) listen.

voice of people united.” LaVina expressed her desire that delegates would leave the conference with the goal of speaking with one voice too.

Jane Martin referred in her talk to His Honour’s presentation and his accomplishments. “It certainly attests to what one person can do.”

Evelyn Good Striker took a moment to thank the conference’s organizing committee for addressing First Nations, Métis and Inuit concerns.

“It’s probably been a long time coming,” she said, and it’s good that the discussion is happening. As she spoke, she referred to a number of barriers and challenges impeding Aboriginal student success.

“In my community, 400 students go into kindergarten and we graduate 20. Where did the rest of them go?” she wondered. “We really still have a long way to go.”

His Honour James Bartleman closed the panel discussion. He stated he was impressed by the dedication of the members of the panel, but noted the discussion was focused on provincial and territorial schools.

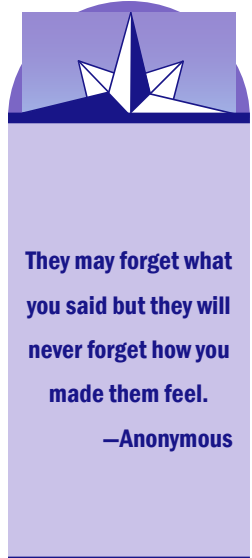
“In northern Ontario, 50 per cent of children go to band-run schools. These success stories are largely not to be found there. The real need is in the band-run schools.”

Teachers in these schools do not belong to the professional organizations and they do not have PD days. “They are on their lonesome up there,” he said.

“You cannot keep education in watertight compartments,” he said. It will not do to merely designate certain aspects as provincial/territorial or federal responsibilities. “It all affects the kids.”

He encouraged delegates to tap into the huge reservoir of good will to be found in the Canadian people.

“Try to find some way to become associated with efforts like the book drives,” he said. “Get involved with civil society to complement your links to government action.”



**They may forget what  
you said but they will  
never forget how you  
made them feel.**

**—Anonymous**



Left to right: **Randy Brydges** (Xerox), **Carol Gray** (Association of Administrators of English Schools of Quebec), **Jim Gibbons** (College of Alberta School Superintendents), **James McCracken** (Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association), **Ken Bain** (Ontario Public Supervisory Officials' Association), **Lee Kubica** (Yukon Education), **Linda Lucas** (Xerox).

## Recognizing Excellence: The 2007 Xerox EXL Awards

On Sunday, July 15, conference delegates came together over the lunch hour to honour CASA colleagues nominated for the EXL Award. At the same time, the CASA Distinguished Service and Honorary Life Membership awards were presented.

The event was hosted by CASA PD director **Ed Wittchen**. Xerox representatives **Linda Lucas** and **Randy Brydges** were on hand to present the EXL Award to **Carol Gray**, this year's winner. Carol is the director of secondary schools for the Lester B. Pearson School Board in the Montreal region.

Affiliate nominees for 2007 included **Julie Hobbs** (Riverside School Board, Quebec), **Jim Gibbons**



Above: **Linda Lucas** (left) and **Randy Brydges** (right) present **Carol Gray** with the Xerox EXL National Award.

Left: **John Darroch** holds his CASA Honorary Life Membership Award as his wife **Marilyn Darroch** looks on.

*Photos by Noreen Lucente*

(Chinook's Edge School Division, Alberta), **Colin Craig** (School District 14, New Brunswick), **James McCracken** (Ottawa Catholic District School Board, Ontario), **Ken Bain** (Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, Ontario), **Lee Kubica** (Yukon Education, Yukon) and Carol.

The CASA Honorary Life Membership Award was presented to **John Darroch**, a former CASA president.

The CASA Distinguished Service Award was presented to both **Shirley McDonald** and **Marion Holmes**, with much gratitude for all of their hard work.

Shirley did a tremendous amount of legwork for the conference in Whitehorse. Marion is the force behind PD Pros, which organizes CASA conferences.



Adventure is  
worthwhile in itself.

—Amelia Earhart

## Leadership And Team Building With Frank Turner: How To Treat Your Staff Like Dogs



Right: Frank Turner shares team-building tips.

Above: Who could resist that furry face? Frank was accompanied by his trusty pal Tank the dog.



And in the end, it all went to the dogs. Or rather, one dog in particular: Tank the retired sled dog. Tank was a hit with conference delegates as he was led through the conference room on Sunday afternoon, gratefully accepting all pets, hugs and snuggles.

Tank is just one of the many dogs cared for by Yukon Quest champion **Frank Turner**. Frank referred to Tank and his extended canine family throughout his inspiring address on leadership and team building. The session brought to a close the 2007 CASA Annual Conference.

“A team is a special group,” Frank said. “Not every dog in my team is going to end up in those top spots, but we have other roles for them to fill.”

Frank does employee appraisals on his dogs, he explained, to determine the strengths and weaknesses of each of the dogs, to build on the strengths, and to protect himself and the rest of the team from exposing the limitations.

“To understand your limitations, you don’t do that when the sun is out and the trail is good, but when you have those conditions that test you,” he explained.

By the time he arrives at the race, he knows each of his dogs very well. Each of them can play a leadership role in different times and situations.

“I’m constantly reconfiguring my team,” he said, quickly acknowledging that a dog team isn’t as complex as human teams. Office politics, for example, don’t really factor when it comes to developing his sled dog teams. “It still comes

down to knowing your team.”

Frank has to keep the dogs happy to make the team strong, he said. Every dog has to have a purpose on the team.

“The dogs need to be able to trust you,” he said. It’s up to him, after all, to take care of their basic needs.

If you ask him on the day before a race which dog is his best on the team, he said, “my answer should be ‘all of them.’”


He works hard to narrow the gap between the abilities of his dogs. The year he won the Quest, there were very few differences between the dogs.

“You’ve got to believe in your plan,” he said, and you’ve got to believe in your team. “Some of my best dogs were late bloomers.”

Frank answered questions from delegates before sharing his closing thoughts. “When we put so much of ourselves in, we can get so much out.”

Reflecting on the tasks that lie ahead for CASA members, he added, “Your challenge far surpasses what is involved in crossing Eagle Summit.”

*Photos by Tara Lee Wittchen*



**The voyage of discovery is not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes.**  
—Marcel Proust

## CASA PEOPLE: Famous Last Words (And Pictures)



Left: **Bob Smilanich** and **Heather Cullen** are amazed by the size of the Yukon cinnamon buns.

Right, top: **Lee Kubica** leads a hike.

Right, below: **Richard Cameron** paddles his canoe.



Photos by Tara Lee Wittchen



Spouses always welcome: **Randi Stangeland**, **Marilyn Ewen** and **Noreen Lucente** relaxing before the Edmonton to Whitehorse flight.



**Barrie** and **Randi Stangeland**: "We'll catch up on sleep on the way home!"

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